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**Creating Space for Communities :
Social Enterprise and the Bright side of Social Capital**

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Abstract

The general aim of this manuscript is to appreciate how social enterprise can create a space of relations and opportunities that impacts beneficially on community welfare and individual wellbeing. We refer to cooperative relations that are aimed at the pursuit of a social goal. In this sense we talk of the bright side of social capital, as opposed to relational networks that are mainly functional to the pursuit of exclusive interests even at the detriment of others. Consistently with the premise, in this work we focus on social enterprise which we define as values-based businesses set up for social and/or environmental purpose, driven by an entrepreneurial spirit.

Specifically we regard social enterprises and their networks of cooperation as the immaterial assets of a community, as reservoirs of pro-social and cooperative attitudes that are able to create connectivity and engender flexible responses to community evolving needs. In other words, social enterprises can be seen as immaterial spaces which support individuals and communities in developing opportunities through activities of various nature as a response to contextual needs. The creation and use of space from this point of view is a reflection of specific values such as cooperation and the public interest.

The study of how social enterprise create space for inclusive relations and opportunities that impacts on community welfare is supported using two illustrative cases, one on arts and one on health. The first connects access to creative spaces with inclusion and community welfare, the other connects community assets to generate social inclusion and to enhance the physical and psychological welfare of NHS patients. The two cases highlight a path for community development building on the nature and assets of social enterprise. The path goes from social enterprise to the creation of inclusive spaces, to the furthering of social inclusion, which ultimately enhances psychological and physical health. Both projects have developed over a medium time span so that we can trace the emerging path of activities and outcomes.

Keywords: inclusive space, social enterprise, social capital, community welfare.

1. Introduction

The general aim of this manuscript is to appreciate how social enterprise can create a space of relations and opportunities that impact beneficially on community welfare and individual wellbeing. We refer to cooperative relations that are aimed at the pursuit of a social goal. In this sense we talk of the bright side of social capital, as opposed to relational networks that are mainly functional to the pursuit of exclusive interests even at the detriment of others.

Consistently with the premise, in this work we focus on social enterprises: values-based businesses set up for social and/or environmental purpose, driven by an entrepreneurial spirit. Social enterprises devote their activities to achieving a wider social or community objective for their members' or a wider interest, and reinvest their surpluses. To respond to the needs of their community with resilience, they need to be economically self-sustainable and, in this respect, they are distinct from other third sector organisations that are mostly dependent on grants and donations (Campbell and Sacchetti, 2014). Moreover, social enterprises' surplus are asset locked, that is, retained within the business to be reinvested in the business or to the community (for example via lower prices or delivery of services with no charge) (cf. Tortia 2010).

Social enterprises have been identified as ideal partners for the provision of public services that traditionally were delivered by governments. In part because the complexity and level of service required exceeds the capacity of centralised services to customise products. In part because the capacity of the public sector to pursue community welfare is challenged by the current debt crisis that has substantially redefined the possibilities of the public sector to invest in a number of socially relevant sectors such as education, the arts, health and welfare services. In the face of this, policy that enables more autonomous development processes such as public-social partnerships can create conditions that support the emergence of bottom-up community initiatives which empower citizens and improve aspects of community welfare.

Specifically we regard social enterprises and their networks of cooperation as the immaterial assets of a community, as reservoirs of pro-social and cooperative attitudes that are able to create connectivity and engender flexible responses to community evolving needs. In other words, *social enterprises can be seen as spaces which support individuals and communities in developing opportunities through activities of various nature as a response to contextual needs*. The creation and use of space from this point of view is a reflection of specific values such as cooperation and the public interest (Sacchetti, 2014).

The study of how social enterprise creates a space of inclusive relations and opportunities that impacts on community welfare is supported by two illustrative cases, one on arts and one on health. The first connects access to creative spaces with inclusion and community welfare, the other regards social enterprise as a community asset that can generate social inclusion and enhance the physical and psychological welfare of NHS patients. The two cases highlight a path for community development building on the nature and assets of social enterprise. The

path goes from social enterprise to the creation of inclusive spaces, to the furthering of social inclusion, which ultimately enhances psychological and physical health. Both projects have developed over a medium time span so that we can trace the emerging path of activities and outcomes.

2. Community failures vs. community ownership

At the most fundamental level our approach is to be ascribed in the institutionalist tradition, since it deals with reproducible patterns of community development in different and evolving socio-economic contexts. Starting from the pioneering statements by Veblen, who interpreted institutions as <<habits of thought>> (Veblen, 1898/1998) we consider two cases in which the model of community development takes distance from what we call the <<community failure>> model, one based on habits centered around prevalence of exclusive interests at times coinciding also with short-terminism (Table 1). These habits of thought, we would argue, are damaging for communities, essentially because they fail to recognize and address communities' broad needs and the interests of different groups within communities, thus creating development deficits and constraining opportunities (Cowling and Sugden, 1998; Sacchetti, 2013; Putman, 2000; Fukuyama, 2001; Sen, 2002).

Albeit values and behaviours can be thought as the genes of communities, their practical realisations, i.e. means (such as organizations) and outcomes (such as prosperity, fulfillment, social inclusion, inequality, uneven development) are usually more evident and observable. A particular characteristic of development choice is that its features tend to be stable overtime, because of limited critical analysis and habituation to particular situations, all elements that contribute to the inertia of social processes. Rather, at the core of critical thinking is cooperation. Against social inertia, cooperation points towards the individual's cognitive or thinking abilities, i.e. to the ability to understand and find solutions to a specific phenomenon together with others, eventually against existing social habits and expectations (Dewey, 1991 [1910]). Institutional economists, sociologists and psychologists convene that cooperation promotes curiosity, creativity and social engagement ultimately reinforcing fulfillment. Where cooperative habits are prominent within communities and the various interests are included and shape decisions that matter we can talk of <<community ownership>>, i.e. of communities that support active citizenship in the public interest.

Cooperation, however, is itself a social habit and depends on reciprocity (the symmetry of give-and-take relations) and proximity (sharing of inner beliefs within and amongst groups and communities of like-minded people) (Laville 1994; Gardin, 2014; Sacchetti and Sugden, 2009). Reciprocity and proximity qualify cooperative behaviours where the relation has an intrinsic value. The quality of the product exchanged can be seen as a consequence of the relation rather than the other way around. It follows that cooperation promotes also learning and mutual advancement (Sacchetti and Sugden, 2003).

Social enterprises, as the main focus of this paper, are argued to be in a position to create space for a habit of cooperation, for the development of a way of choosing and acting that is beneficial for the individual and for the community (Sacchetti, 2014). This habit is a necessity for social enterprises since they are oriented towards the satisfaction of specific community needs and are driven by pro-social values. We suggest that *social enterprise are organizations explicitly based on habits of cooperation and are especially suitable to give voice and space to the multiplicity of aspirations and needs that may coexist at a given point or unfold over time* (Cf. Elster, 1986 on multiple aspirations).

As summarised in Table 1, the model suggested is opposed to communities where inclusion and cooperation are not valued or struggle to find proper expression. This is a fertile terrain for the growth of exclusive interests, for the proliferation of networks where decision-making power is concentrated, and where behavioural attitudes are skewed towards exclusion rather than cooperation (Sacchetti and Sugden, 2009; Sacchetti, 2013). Community failure occurs when there is a deficit in the expression and recognition of interests, or when the needs of communities are disregarded. One of the reasons, as identified by Cowling and Sugden (1998) using a strategic governance approach, is the concentration of strategic decision-making power in the hands of a few. The power concentration problem, in our case, might imply that the governance of specific service provision fails to effectively pursue wider community interests. Social capital explanations, complementary, emphasise community failures when linkages between community stakeholders and key decision-makers (the so-called linking social capital) are not in place. Communities, under these circumstances, do not take ownership of the process that defines issues of public interest.

Table 1: Approaches compared: Community failures vs. Community ownership

	Community failures (Dark side)	Community ownership (Bright side)
Context	<i>Exclusive and constraining spaces / Short-terminism</i>	<i>Inclusive and creative spaces / Long-term development of capabilities</i>
Needs	<i>Deficits</i>	<i>Public needs</i>
Values and Behaviours	<i>Individuals as passive isolated recipients / competition and consumerism</i>	<i>Shared pro-social values, cooperation and networking</i>
Outcomes	<i>Conflict, mistrust, inequality</i>	<i>Ownership, active citizenship and wellbeing, resilience</i>

3. Social enterprise and the creation of community ownership

Albeit cooperation is an inter-subjective process aimed at identifying patterns of action that achieve mutually beneficial solutions, it dialectically opens up the task of creating the conditions for its practical realisation. Being businesses with explicit values, social enterprises can have a purpose for building their activities and their network of relationships differently from a reality of exclusion and community failure.

Practical realisation (building on spatial sociology) is searched in physical and organisational space, in the activities undertaken within, and in the norms and practices that regulate such activities (Lefebvre, 1974). In this sense, a physical space such as a building, or an organisation such as the social enterprise, which reflect inclusiveness are produced spaces that embody part of the practical pre-conditions for developing cooperation and inclusion in the course of everyday life. Without elements of material realisation, these values and attitudes would be displaced by values underpinning conventional economic aims and processes (Lefebvre 1974; Sacchetti, 2014; Sacchetti and Tortia, 2013; Witt, 2003). It follows that organisations that use in their praxis and outcomes the values of cooperation can contribute to the resilience of cooperative attitudes within communities (Sacchetti, 2014).¹ Social enterprise works as the enabler and amplifier of the values of cooperation, thus generating positive effects across societies at large (Sacchetti and Tortia, 2014; Borzaga and Sacchetti, 2014). In this sense they transform the value of cooperation and community welfare into practical business solutions.

4. The identification, creation and use of community assets: two case studies

The two case studies we present here bring together different approaches and expertise. They have been developed independently but with a common underlying rationality: to understand whether social enterprises can expand and amplify the benefits delivered to communities.

4.1 Creative Stirling: Methodology

The first case presents the activities of Creative Stirling (CS), a recently founded social enterprise based in Stirling (Scotland). CS is an entrepreneurial community-based project initiated with the aim of enhancing opportunities for the community of Stirling-based artists and, as a result, empowering other communities in Stirling. The case study has been

¹ Still, social enterprise and their activities may not be synonymous of cooperation. They can adjust to that part of the market context where performance is conventionally measured solely by pecuniary achievement (Veblen 1899/2003). The pervasiveness of the profit motivation and related practices, namely in terms of concentration of decision-making power and distributional effects, becomes of concern when conventional business aims are placed before the identification of community needs and their solutions (Weisbrod, 1998; Sacchetti and Tortia, 2013).

developed over three years of extended engagement between the author and CS, as a development priority of the institution where one of the authors was based in 2010 (the Stirling Institute of Socio-Management). The Stirling Institute for Socio-Management at the University of Stirling was at the time pursuing a range of research and learning initiatives focused on the impact of creative spaces on local socio-economic development. The specific rationale for considering creativity and artistic activities came from a critical reflection on the nature and implications of the global economy which identified a tendency to leave the vast majority of people constrained and indeed powerless (Sacchetti et al. 2009). Conversely artistic activities that stimulate people's imagination, creativity and critical thinking were argued to offer a combined opportunity for social development, inclusion and entrepreneurial activity.

The research was embedded by the author in graduate activities offered within the MBA (2012-13) and MSc in Socio-Economic Development over two years (2012-2013 and 2013-2014), where students have conducted research projects around CS as part of their learning curriculum eventually culminating for some in a masters dissertation. The methodology used in the studies was qualitative, and relied on interviews and participatory observation during events organised by CS. Interviews involved the founders of CS, its staff and some stakeholders, such as participants to events, Stirling Council and Creative Scotland. Interviews with the founders and staff were recorded or filmed. Photo elicitation has also been used during participatory observation and two short videos (Visual Essays) have been produced to illustrate the findings. Data collection was conducted at different points in time in 2013 and in 2014 with the active participation of different cohorts of students. It addressed Creative Stirling nature and aims, its activities, development opportunities, use of social capital, as well as current and potential community impacts. The findings have been showcased to CS staff and other faculty at completion for feedback and recommendations. This research approach was necessary in order to appreciate the evolution and context in which CS emerged and developed from its very start, with a unique opportunity to tap into Stirling's community features and to know CS founders and staff, their motivations, aims, challenges and evolving community impacts. The approach has also provided the opportunity to create a collaboration bond between academia and this community-based organisation.

4.2 Engaging Community Asset: Methodology

With a focus on better health and social care integration and an abundance of social concerns in communities across Scotland, the Engaging Community Assets (ECA) project aimed to bring a new approach to not only determine the needs within each individual community, but also to focus on the positive capability and capacity of that community by using social enterprises to improve the overall health and wellbeing of the community.

ECA, funded by the Scottish Government, was built on the Royal College of General Practitioners 'Essence of General Practice' initiative and developed in partnership with Assist Social Capital and the International Futures Forum.

GPs have a vast amount of knowledge and understanding about their patients' communities and therefore are able to contribute to their community's wellbeing and social capital to help inform local health relevant decisions. According to statistics issued by Information Services Division Scotland, approximately 24.2 million people living in Scotland had face-to-face consultations with their practice nurse or GP in 2012/13, with 82% of registered patients seeing their GP or Practice Nurse at least once during the year. Because of the high level of respect and trust patients have in GPs.

The project aimed to optimise the relationships between GPs and the communities in which they work. This was achieved by building local relationship networks through engagement with local social enterprises and community organisations. It was hoped that the creation of such a partnership model would enable relevant suitable solutions to address the community needs to be identified.

ECA began in June 2012 with the aim of improving GP engagement with their communities by getting both the GP and community to identify local issues and improve some of these using existing social enterprises within the community. Research indicates that there is a connection between a person's involvement in their community and their wellbeing (Braun 1999). The overall aim of the project was to improve patients' wellbeing by signposting them to relevant services in their community with the potential to achieve this. An additional aim of the project was to develop a transferrable Engaging Community Assets model for any practice in Scotland.

The first stage was to recruit and engage two GP practices and undertake a Learning Journey with each to develop their understanding of social enterprise and illustrate to them relevant services that were already available in their area, which they were previously unaware of. Community meetings were then held in each community using highly participatory techniques. Participants discussed what they believed the main issues in their community were and considered potential solutions to these issues. Appropriate social enterprises and a local voluntary organisation were then selected for each practice to signpost patients to whom they felt would benefit from the types of services offered. Meetings were held between representatives from the selected organisations and staff from each practice to share information and raise awareness about ways in which they could help patients.

5. Engaging Communities on Creativity for reducing social inequalities: Creative Stirling

5.1 An inclusive space for opportunities and for addressing community needs

Creative Stirling is a community interest company that emerged in the city of Stirling, Scotland in 2012. It grew out of the personal connections of the two founders, one coming from the art events background and one from business education. The idea was to <<connect

people and make things happen>>, to create a <<hub>> that could give space to local artists and their work and, as a result, give Stirling community access to cultural activities and opportunities.. As the director says:

<<We are a community and we are for the community. Yes, it's about, you know, creating cultures events, but to me that kind of works should work for everyone>>
(Director, 2014)

Creative Stirling position themselves differently from other arts focused organizations in Stirling. The main difference being their view and method about the provision of culture. Whilst other experiences in town were argued to benefit, through their approach, a restricted number of young people (focusing for example on one type of creative activities or by engaging young or marginalized categories of people as an add-on) CS places a concern for social inclusion and accessibility at the heart of their work. The two main areas of exclusion were identified by the director in inequality of access to education in conjunction with living in the town deprived areas: young people and parents from poorest areas, students, the community in general. Interestingly, it was noted that also artists interacting with CS can be people who were somehow disadvantaged in the current education system or had a bad experience in education.

The spaces used by CS are also distinctive of their approach. They use a variety of spaces in town that are publicly accessible for pop up events (e.g. restaurants and pubs), the Old Town Jail building where CS host main offices and laboratories; and <<Made in Stirling>>, a dedicated shop for local artists. Events are offered at very low prices to keep them accessible.

In 2011 one of the founders attended a meeting with the Council where a deficit in creative industries and related opportunities was emphasized as one of community needs. The now director of CS had a business project which positioned a small social enterprise right where the gap was: support for creative industries in the community. The availability of a physical space was crucial at that stage and for the purpose. Stirling Council offered on that occasion the use of the Old Town Jail at a lower-than-commercial rate. The Old Town Jail hosted a traditional jail display in the context of a heritage venue. As such, it was closed in 2012 and it is now the main space used by CS. The director's business plan converted the jail. Contemporary artists, digital literate, and technology were used to re-interpret and qualify this venue of historical heritage, showcasing different ways to tell past and present events (one of the opening exhibitions, to illustrate, engaged artists in interpreting the independence referendum for Scotland).

This building was disliked by other potential users because of its features (it is an historical building) and because of its location, which is one of the most deprived areas in Scotland. The Old Town Jail is in fact situated in an area of social housing traditionally called <<Top of the Town>> very close to Stirling Castle, a prestigious historical heritage site. The hill hosting the Old Town comprises mostly social housing and is populated by some of the lowest income population in Stirling. In the director's words:

<<.. Um, we're in the top, we're now in the status, in the top 15 percent of multiple deprivation. There's all sorts of, um, complex problems because of, um, the community are quite, kind of severely disadvantaged, um, and it's been that way, um, since they renovated the housing and made it social housing a long time ago ...You get international tourists, you know, rubbing up directly against, um, people who are in a dire, um, social status>>(Director, 2014)

Coming down from the Top of the Town, near the high-street is <<Made in Stirling>>, the shop for local artists which *<<doesn't operate quite like a commercial gallery>>* (Director, 2104). This is a retail project that benefited from Creative Scotland funds in support of the regeneration of local high-streets. Local artists were called to contribute *<<to enable people to develop and retail their own art works, as an occupation if not for their personal gratification>>* (Director, 2014).

<<The idea is that it, um, supports artists at a fundamental, you know individual livelihood but also all of the learning that they, these are artists who wouldn't be able to sell through a commercial gallery or support their own retail activities. So, they're learning about the market, they're learning about, um, the work comparing work in maybe the same practice in with, ah, different artists, um, they're developing all sorts of knowledge and skills about how to how to, um, retail. Um, it's ultimately completely flexible because, ah, lot of these artists maybe have other jobs, they maybe aren't in a position to jump off and rely completely on making, um, or designing or whatever they are>> (Director, 2014)

The Old Town Jail and Made in Stirling provide CS dedicated spaces. There are other spaces accessible to the public such as the town's pubs and restaurants where CS organize their events. CS use multiple physical spaces in different parts of the town and at different times. Day events for children and young people, night events for adults. Events, conceived in this way, represent the immaterial space of opportunities created by CS. In doing so, CS fill physical spaces with contents and meaning.

For example, the <<Coder Dojo>> is a computer science laboratory (at the Old Town Jail) which is offered free as part of a government policy for young people at the Top of the Town to learn the language of coding and its functions. The social purpose with this project was to provide a space where to improve digital literacy amongst those who live in deprived areas. The Coder Dojo runs on a voluntary basis whilst other events may generate income for the artists/technology literates.

CS operate also via pop-up events that move around different places, such as <<Pecha Kutch>>, based on a Japanese model of information sharing. It is a way for people to share unusual skills, knowledge and expertise, to get to talk to each other about specific topics. Pop-up events can involve also music, film, poetry and are kept at a minimum price to cover costs.

Another activity is the promotion and organization of network events, which are offered free of charge, since they represent <<grass-roots access for people in community who just want to share what they do and meet other creative people>> (Director, 2014).

5.2 Behaviors

At the time when CS was set up, public money for culture were thinning as part of a public spending review. CS entered the Stirling scene with an original approach. Incumbent art organizations were used to rely on public funding. The constraints that followed the public spending review provided the occasion for regarding others in the sector in competition for funding. CS considered the use of a collaborative attitude as a strategic element from the beginning of the venture. Collaboration was already part of the background or habit of the founders, where their job was in different contexts one of <<outreaching creating partnerships and collaborative projects>> (Director, 2014). This attitude was then reinforced by contextual conditions, or by <<reading policy>> and by anticipating the consequences of the drastic changes introduced in the cultural sector. Cooperation was seen a necessary condition for survival.

The two most important partnerships are now with Artlink Central, Ice-cream Architecture, and the University of Stirling. Artlink is a social enterprise that operates with jail prisoners offering arts projects and therapeutic arts. They work with the NHS and with service agreements with the criminal justice system: <<It's not that kind of thing we have the resources to do, but, um, it's the sort of thing we aspire to, so, we figured working a partnership with them>>(Director, 2014). Ice-Cream Architecture on the other hand is a team of young architects who work on community engagement and city planning. From the initial survival approach, linkages grow to generate more opportunities that enrich the experience and bring partners close to each other on the basis of shared values.

These partnerships are now formal but not project-led. Rather, they are self-funded and based on a genuine will to learn from each other, share experiences and ideas. This long-term path in developing relations, then, facilitates learning and access to opportunities when they arise:

<< Ah, they do things like service design, um, and we worked with them on a couple of projects when we first set up, so, um, we and that we, very importantly, share the same kind of values. I've been in a awful lot of, um, partnership situation where it's been on paper but not actually, um, meaningful or effective or whatever. So, this was a, um, this was a long kind of process to, you know, it's through having existing relationships with both of these organisations and with those individuals that led those organisations and, and realizing that we as I said shared the same set of values. And that's how we came to set up this formal strategic relationship. And importantly, it's not project-led at the moment.>> (Director, 2014)

The partnership with the University of Stirling, and in particular within the space provided by the graduate course on socio-economic development, grew in a similar way, based on the mutual will to explore possibilities on the ground of a proximity of values concerns for communities. The link was facilitated in the first instance by the fact that one of the two directors is a member of staff at the University, working at the Research and Enterprise Office and with a strong knowledge of local business and local connections. The other director – who has engaged the most with the research project – has a background in arts and had worked as cinema development officer at Dundee Contemporary Arts centre and, lately, at Macrobert, an established non-profit organization located at Stirling University campus, where she contributed to a young people festival (Mfest) in collaboration with the Arts Academy. The link with the University has now gone beyond the initial relation and has extended to specific activities in cinema development with the School of Film and Media.

5.3 Outcomes

CS create space and use space to generate connectivity amongst artists and generate social value in the community. Since the start, in 2012, they have reached so far several outcomes:

- I. Two dedicated physical spaces: the shop used by artists to sell their works in the low part of the town, and the headquarters in the Old Town Jail. In between, they use occasional spaces hosted by local restaurants, pubs and hotels. These spaces connect the two parts of the town physically. In this way, Creative Stirling cannot be identified with deprived or well-off areas since they can be everywhere depending on the activity or event. Access is improved and there is no prejudice attached to the physical location.
- II. A space for learning and opportunities for local artists through the shop and through the pop-up events that give them visibility and acceptable economic entries.
- III. A space of inclusion for the community to work with the artists or to interact with each others. This happens through workshops, which generate income for the artists, and pop-up events that move around different places.
- IV. Space for young people and their parents through dedicated workshops.
- V. Space for volunteers and staff (such as students, mentors, managers) with pro-social motivations and cooperative attitudes who would otherwise have the opportunity to work on art projects for the community.

6. Engaging Communities on Health and Wellbeing for reducing social isolation: Royal College of General Practitioners and Social Enterprises

6.1 Context and Needs

In 2010, The Christie Commission asserted that the current public service system is “‘top-down’ and unresponsive to the needs of individuals and communities”. To switch the balance of power around decision making to a “bottom-up” approach, Engaging Community Assets used Learning Journeys and Community Conversations. The aim was to invite the community to determine their own needs and to strengthen their capability to identify and optimise existing sustainable solutions from within their own communities, such as services being delivered by community-based social enterprises delivering indirect public health benefits.

Given the current financial climate and the growing demand on public services, social enterprises was introduced as a financially more viable model for the delivery of these services over more traditional grant funded organisations and therefore more capable of delivering sustainable solutions to the issues identified in the longer-term.

6.2 Behaviors

The project aimed to use an open ended, participatory process as a replicable methodology to build local networks that create reciprocity and supportive relationships and to identify and co-produce beneficial solutions and services appropriate for that community.

The community events were delivered using World Café and Open Space. The venues were chosen to provide informal spaces where the community could meet and engage with the GPs on an equal basis. The spaces included, a café in a community hospital, a local church and two community halls. For the World Café sessions delegates were seated in small groups of no more than 5 at a table to maximize the opportunity for every individual to have their say, maximizing diversity of opinion. The second stage meetings were facilitated using Open Space as a tool to maximize ownership of the ideas relating to new services.

Initially, a participation approach was used involving key informants to highlight what they perceived were the main issues in their community and facilitated discussion to enable them to identify solutions to these issues. Using this assets-based approach to engage the community from the outset helped citizens to take ownership of their situation and give them a sense of purpose by helping them to help themselves and to maximise sustainability.

The project has significantly raised awareness of local social enterprises and their services and changed the understanding of the GPs who took part in terms of their understanding of social enterprise and a values based approach to business. GPs are keenly aware that their

professional standing is based on the trust instilled in them by their patients and they are therefore extremely cautious about who they are willing to refer or sign posting their patients.

In Scotland, GPs are wary of the profit motive of private sector businesses. They are also disinclined to use local charitable organisations, stating that these tend to come and go depending on their ability to access grant funding and that personnel changes all the time as a result. This means the personal relationships are lost and so is the mutual trust. In contrast once they became more familiar with the social enterprise model they were very comfortable with the non- profit-distributing motive of the social enterprises and appreciated the idea that using an income generating activity to deliver local services could provide longer-term sustainability of these services.

The social enterprises who took part on the project reported that they had grown in confidence in terms of their working relationships with GPs locally and with the NHS in general. They highlighted the fact that previously they had found it extremely difficult to engage with the professional health care sector, but through this project they had been supported to articulate their services more effectively in terms of beneficial public health outcomes.

6.3 Outcomes

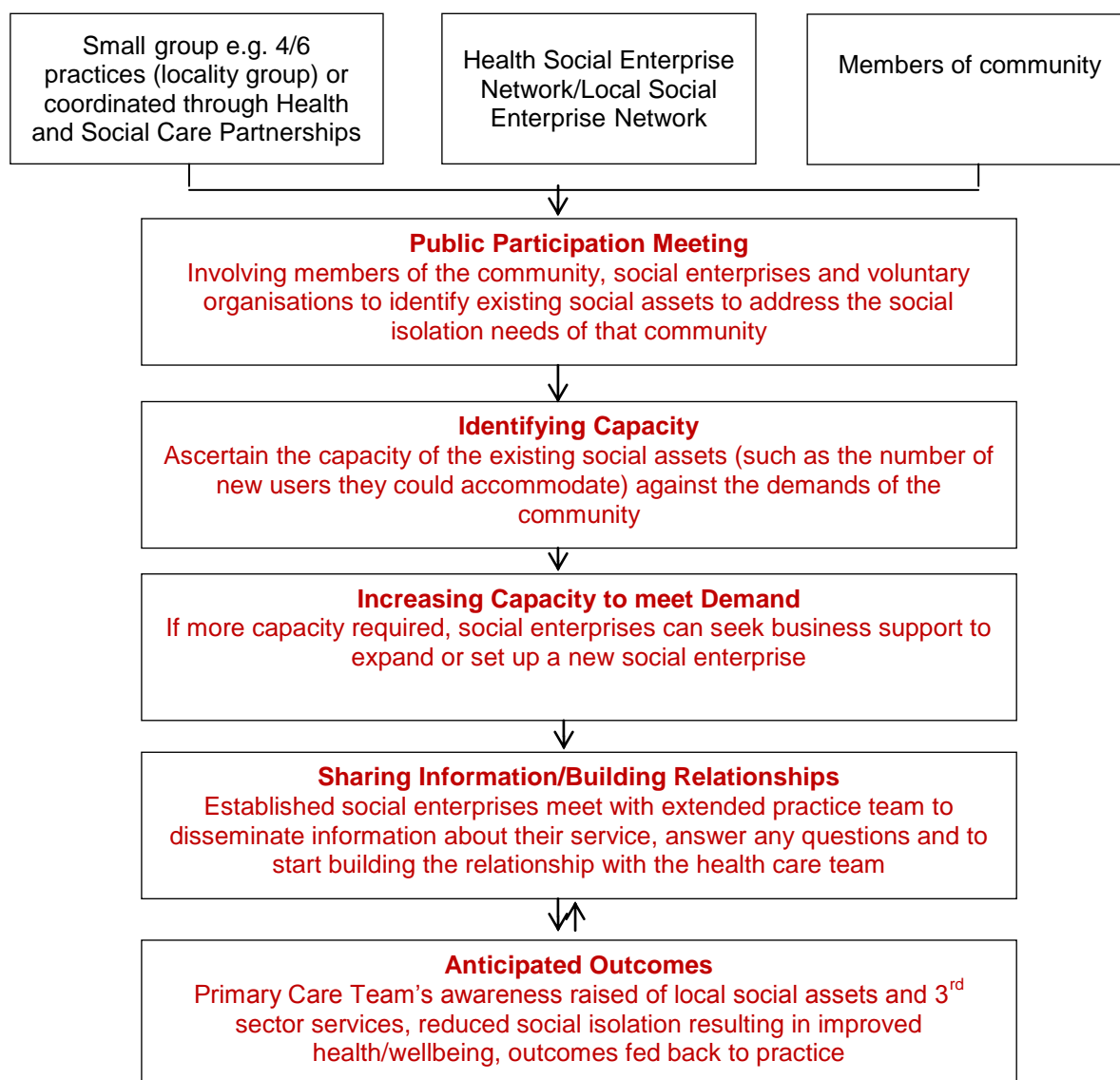
Both the GPs and the social enterprises expressed their belief that that the project had a positive impact by generating new relationships and shared understanding between the two sectors. They also felt that the project would have benefitted from having had a longer funding stream than the 18 months allocated, since the development of the relationships between the GPs and the social enterprises had taken nearly 15 months to achieve. They wished to point out to the Scottish Government that health improvement models which use social enterprises as vehicles to tap into local social networks to improve local health and wellbeing will inevitably take longer than ‘top-down’ solutions to achieve, but ultimately through local ownership and shared understanding, deliver more sustainable and effective means to encourage local communities to identify local solutions to improve the health and/or wellbeing of the community.

The following points summarise some of the outcomes achieved by the project;

- GP Practices felt that their awareness and knowledge of available Social Enterprises had improved
- GPs felt more confident in recommending Social Enterprises to patients
- A ring-fenced fund should be established to invest in health based outcomes of social enterprise
- Built upon the learning and outcomes gained through the Engaging Community Assets project, a model to improve local health and wellbeing by reducing social

isolation has been developed as a proposed method of engaging GP practices with their community and utilising social assets and Social Enterprises to improve the health and/or wellbeing of the community, below:

Figure 1
Engaging Community Assets Model
Aim: to improve local health and wellbeing and reduce social isolation
 (Facilitated by Engaging Community Assets Facilitator)



7. Discussion and concluding remarks

Our framework of analysis has highlighted the potential that social enterprises have for creating community ownership. They do so by generating a variety of spaces, material and immaterial. Material spaces include the conversion and use of physical buildings and the setup of a specific form of socially-oriented business organization. Immaterial spaces include

spaces for learning, exchanging ideas, be creative, talk about experiences, engage with others. All these spaces are the outcome of the fundamental cooperative attitudes that are implicit in social enterprise and of the resulting network of relationships that result from such attitudes.

A comparison between the two cases emphasizes two different ways of doing this. Creative Stirling is an example of organization that has created these spaces out of the initiative of the co-founders, building on their contacts and then progressively enlarging the network often informally. Engaging Community Assets is, on the other hand, a project that was designed by the College of General Practitioners in partnership with key stakeholders from the Scottish social enterprise sector, identifying and involving social enterprises with formal agreements and a co-produced model that was applied in different medical districts. The scale of the spaces created is also different. In the one case it regards one locality (Stirling), its community and a variety of interested groups within it. In the other case it involves one specific stakeholder (the users of the NHS), doctors and their practices, social enterprises.

The potential for communities and their welfare is indicated by the initial observations presented in our case studies. For CS it is the creation and use of a variety of spaces that makes their social aims achievable. Cooperation with the Council on the Old Town Jail that appears fundamental. The building in conjunction with the social enterprise idea created the space for social inclusion using the arts. Events held downtown in itinerant places have built over time a different visibility to CS and access to multiple audiences, using community-based assets (local artists, local restaurants) and other partners. The collaboration with public bodies did not make CS dependent but is fundamental to maintain visibility and a social purpose. We interpret the role of government policy (eg. on digital literacy) or other public organizations (with Creative Scotland for the shop) as the upper level where broader policy spaces are developed and where social enterprises like CS could germinate, thus creating connections with the city: e.g. further partnerships with the Council and with other organizations and individuals in Stirling. Physical space and immaterial space (event-related space and relational space) overlap constantly reciprocally alimentering each other.

For ECA it is the identification of new approaches to the delivery of local services which have a beneficial impact on public health, where social enterprises provide the container for new norms for delivering services through non-profit-distributing enterprises. This space then created opportunities to introduce GPs, directly connected to large numbers of the local community through their role as trusted health professionals, with local social enterprises who support individuals from the most disadvantaged segments of the local community. The series of participatory events carried out to engage the two networks, made it possible to construct bridges across the relationship divide which previously existed. The use of local community buildings provided informal settings that equalized the relationships between the entrepreneurs and the GPs, enabling a greater level of trust to emerge than using the buildings where the GP practices were based. The fact that the project was funded by the Scottish Government's Third Sector Division, provided a background which gave an important level of credibility to the project itself and ensured that GPs were incentivized to remain engaged

with the process despite the challenges they faced in understanding a new model of business represented by their local social enterprises.

Both models have advantages and limitations. In the case of CS the spaces created are embedded in the community and become part of people's everyday life. However issues of resilience and continuity are tied to the ability of the social entrepreneurs to keep a constant and frequent presence in town, face the challenges of working with the Council, transform informal partnerships into formal projects and make the network grow. In the case of ECA the space offered by social enterprise is mediated by the confines of the customs and traditions of the medical profession and therefore more likely to be restricted by the ability of the GPs to actually understand social enterprise nature and to coordinate the process.

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